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Anarchist news and views from Aotearoa/NZ....# 20 July/August 2001 Free/Donation



PROTESTS AGAINST THE G8 IN GENOA

A NZ ANARCHIST EXPERIENCES
STATE REPRESSION
UP FRONT AND PERSONAL

also: wobblies in aotearoa – east timor – anarchist conference in christchurch

thr@ll

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Christchurch

Aotearoa/New Zealand

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nz anarchist/libertarian socialist contacts

note: The Thrall collective does not necessarily endorse the views of the groups listed below.

NATIONAL

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)

Aotearoa

PO Box 5407 Dunedin. e-mail: iwwgmbdunedin@e3.co.nz

LOCAL GROUPS

Christchurch

Anarchist Round Table, PO Box 22-076

Christchurch. e-mail:

anroundtable@hotmail.com

ART hold public meetings on the first Thursday of every month at 7.30pm.

Contact ART for further details.

Wellington

Committee for the Establishment of Civilisation (CEC) and the Freedom Shop, PO Box 9263, Te Aro, Wellington.

e-mail: cec@mad.scientist.com

website: http://www.tao.ca/~cec/

Libertarian Communists, c/- PO Box

6387, Te Aro, Wellington, e-mail:

libcommies@yahoo.co.nz

The Libertarian Communists hold public discussions the second Monday of every month at 7pm in the Peace and Environment Centre, 2nd floor, Trades Hall, 126 Vivian St, Wellington.

Hamilton

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thirdeye@wombles.com

website: http://www.geocities.com/

the_third_eye_website/

Class War, PO Box 78-104, Grey Lynn, Auckland. e-mail: classwar@rome.com

let's fight for more fun, not for less pain; let's play the only game worth playing: the destruction of the old world, and the creation of a new classless, stateless one

papua new guinea uprising

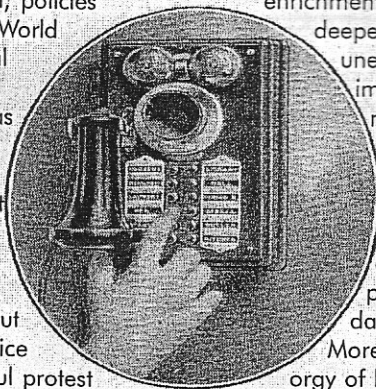
Currently, there is a deepening resistance to capitalism in much of the so called 'developing world'. Whilst Europeans focus on the vaguely anti-capitalist protests that have occurred in places like Goteborg and Genoa, it's real easy to overlook the fact that recently there has been genuine, widespread *working class* social unrest in places such as Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina (see article below) and Zimbabwe against the brutality of free-market capitalism, policies often imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Now this resistance has recently come to the Pacific, with anti-free market capitalist revolt in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The most recent revolt in PNG broke out in response to riot police "dispersing" a peaceful protest sit-in by up to 3000 students, workers and the unemployed outside the Prime Minister's office in Port Moresby on June 26. They chased the mainly student protesters into the local university & then shot them (but only after the demonstrators had surrendered to the police as ordered with their hands up in the air). Three

were killed, 17 wounded.

The sit-in aimed to halt privatisation and evict the World Bank and IMF out of PNG. The PNG government is implementing a privatisation programme which is backed (read: enforced) by the IMF and World Bank in return for a soft loan. This privatisation push has meant capitalists have acquired cheap government assets and traditional, clan owned land for their own enrichment, resulting in deepening class divisions, unemployment, impoverishment, and a mass protest movement against privatisation.

In response to the murder of the demonstrators, protests continued for days. The next day Port Moresby burned after an orgy of looting and burning of businesses. Substantial damage was caused by the "rioters". Even a police barracks was burnt down. As well, the PNG TUC called for a general strike to support the students, and the PNG Maritime workers union refused to work ships & asked foreign maritime unions to black all PNG cargo. The situation has since calmed down.



revolt in argentina

There were a series of huge anti-government rallies across Argentina on August 8. The rallies coincided with a 48-hour strike by public teachers and civil servants who are protesting against a decision by the senate to cut government salaries and pensions by 13%. The austerity measures are part of a government effort aimed at securing emergency loans from the IMF and preventing the country defaulting on existing debts. A similar strike the previous month also closed public offices and brought transport services across the country to a halt. Police were deployed in huge numbers in the capital of Buenos Aires, where angry union members and unemployed people blocked streets. An airline union cut off the road to the domestic airport in Buenos Aires, creating massive traffic jams. The latest austerity plan is the seventh to be implemented in Argentina in the last two years. Roughly a third of Argentina's population live in poverty, and unemployment stands at around 16%. According to the BBC, "markets and investors" have welcomed the measures.

give us some money (please)

Like all the best things in life, *Thrall* is free. But unfortunately we need money to keep on truckin. Each issue costs us well over a hundred bucks, and this isn't anyway near covered by donations at the moment. We certainly ain't rich, and are a bit desperate for dosh, so send us some please! By so doing you will be supporting Aotearoa's only libertarian leftist publication. Send well concealed money or cheques made out to "cash only" (sorry, we don't have a bank account) to Thrall, PO Box 22-076, Christchurch.

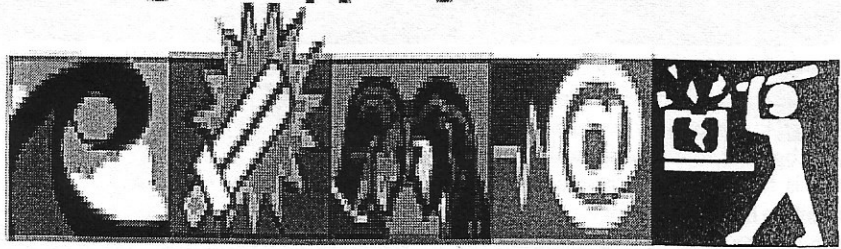
resisting the capitalist tsunami

I just spent three days at the Catching the Knowledge Wave conference in Auckland, thanks to a press pass via student press. As expected it was a vile gathering of capitalists, politicians and media bent on selling their vision (in fact the *Herald* was a major sponsor of the event, along with McKinsey & Company, Deutsche Bank, Carter Holt Harvey and the University of Auckland). Huge screens sequenced through their corporate icons as 500 invited participants gathered (at \$1000 per head) to hear talks about how New Zealand can become a 'knowledge economy' – apparently with lower tax rates, closer partnerships between business and universities, New Zealanders learning to respect achievement (i.e., businesspeople making a lot of money), and an all-around better attitude towards working hard to make the nation's business more productive and profitable.

REPACKAGING THE NEW RIGHT

This last goal was repeated again and again. Neo-liberalism is repackaged in an even scarier patriotic form. It's no longer about 'empowering the individual', it's about building Our Nation's competitiveness. It's about having 'common vision'. Harvard's Dr Michael Porter (brought to the country for a single day by Steven Tindall for a rumoured \$100,000) said that here there is 'still not a complete commitment to a direction' and there needed to be a 'concerted effort to get over differences of opinion'. Tindall gushed that he 'spent a lot of money to get Michael Porter here...and it was worth every penny!' before reiterating the need to build a common vision: 'We have to trust each other...collaboration is the answer...let's put aside our differences...We can do it. We can do it together.' Applause, tumultuous applause, and I felt very tiny way at the back of the

Catching the Knowledge Wave conference



massive Sheraton ballroom.

The central point of the 'vision' we are all supposed to get in behind is that economic growth improves everyone's lives and that high growth is necessary before social needs are addressed. Therefore we should be working to make New Zealand a more productive and profitable place for capitalists to do business. As Dr Porter put it, social and economic well-being cannot be separated. Well, true, but it hadn't occurred that the capitalist economic system was actually responsible for the social deprivation he hinted at.

Poverty and inequality were hardly mentioned at all during the conference, except in terms of a 'digital divide', which could be bridged by 'equipping the people who are not prospering with the tools they need to prosper' – no, not the means of production but high speed internet connections (perhaps they could eBay their kitchen sinks and copper wiring in the scrap metal sites).

SCARY TALK

Some of the talk was as scary as anything heard in the last twenty years. Reserve Bank Governor Don Brash seriously suggested scrapping the unemployment benefit and minimum wage to let labour markets 'clear'. Jenny Shipley (leader of the National Party) responded positively, hinting in the *Herald* that National might take up the Clinton welfare model – two years benefit maximum at one time, and a five year lifetime dole limit. A deathwish, maybe, for social stability, but pretty unpleasant to

live through by American accounts.

It was unclear where the 'business leaders' thought the trust and united vision they talked about would come from given the pace and scale of marginalisation thanks to business's visions in recent times. Still, journalist/participant Colin James had a point when he gloated that there were few protesters outside compared to 'elite gatherings' (his words) in other countries recently. 'The government has the popular authority to take the risks that are necessary,' he concluded.

Anyway, the conference ended on a high note and all these people were to go forth and start prophesying this new vision. It can be assumed there will be more of Colin James' 'elite gatherings' in the near future, so maybe we should make sure there are more dissidents outside? If we are about to see a public consolidation of business consensus, that gives us something to attack, since we're not about to get any G8 summits or World Economic Forum meetings, and APEC isn't due back for another decade or so. It's something to focus on in the economic realm, it will encroach on places where there has been some opposition to build on (eg. the universities that are supposed to get closer to business), and all this talk of 'coming together' is just asking for someone to show there are some serious divisions in our society that can't just be high speed internetted away.

– Mike

American Blower

VENTILATING, HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING, DRYING, MECHANICAL DRAFT

MANUFACTURERS OF ALL TYPES OF AIR

HANDLING EQUIPMENT SINCE 1881

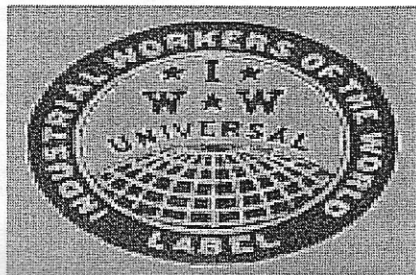
the industrial workers of the world in aotearoa

Ever woke up in the morning, cast a dispassionate eye over the economy and society that has been created, and thought "Gee this is fantastic! Give me more of this!" Neither have I. In fact, I've still to meet the person who has. Capitalism, for all its sophisticated propaganda, for all its carrots and all its sticks, has failed to instill in people the idea that capitalism is good and capitalism is right. At the end of the day capitalism is reduced to maintaining control. And that control isn't as firm as we might be led to believe.

REVOLUTIONARY INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Since its inception in 1905 the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) has had as its principle aim the abolition of the wage system and the establishment of Industrial Democracy. Founded during a time of intense debate between radicals in various countries over whether it was best to capture existing craft and trade unions, the IWW represented a decision to develop Revolutionary Industrial Unionism as a separate entity. Avowedly anti-capitalist, its aim to organise all workers, regardless of job, gender, race, or age into One Big Union was a powerful and successful idea that quickly spread. For example, the IWW was the inspiration behind the formation of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union in 1908, the One Big Union for Irish workers.

A few years later the Russian Revolution, in conjunction with the Red Scare in the US, saw the IWW effectively suppressed and marginalised as a labour organisation. In Australia the union was proscribed while in the United States the reaction to the "One Big Union" was particularly



brutal. By the 1920s every wobbly (a nickname for members of the IWW) in the US understood that to be a wob was to invite being hanged, shot, beaten, jailed, deported or some combination thereof.

DIRECT ACTION LIVES ON

In spite of the global suppression of the union, its tactics survived.

Civil rights demonstrators of the 60s engaging in direct action were, whether they knew it or not, employing tactics first practised by the IWW some 50 years previously. Now, 50 years on from that last popular upsurge of democracy, the anti-capitalist movement is employing not just the tactics but the decentralised organisational tenets of the IWW too. Which is not to imply that the IWW should enjoy some primacy or whatever. But the fact that a 100 year old union is so bang up to date has to be worth mentioning.

From being written off by many, the IWW is now growing in the US, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Finland, Ireland, Australia, Britain, Italy, Russia...the list goes on and now includes a small presence in Aotearoa with the setting up of a General Membership Branch in Dunedin.

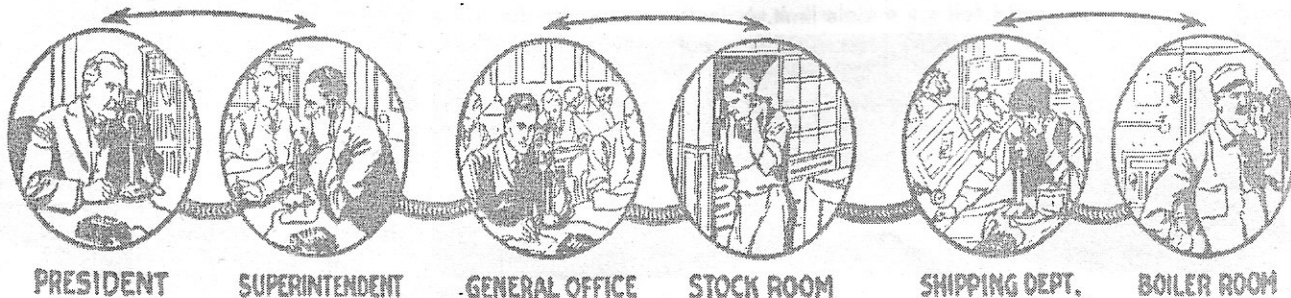
PUTTING THE SHITS UP BOSSES

Which may seem a little odd because

Dunedin isn't exactly renowned as a hotbed of political activity these days. But then, last December various Dunedin activists (yes, we do exist!) began the frustrating exercise of supporting wharfie pickets at Port Chalmers and Bluff against attempted casualisation of the wharfies by Carter Holt Harvey. Frustration set in because union officials were offered sound tactical advice based on years of accumulated political activism but ignored it all. So some of us formed an IWW branch. We didn't want to form a political group because the politics of current IWW members cover such a wide spectrum and anyway, workers do not generally respond well to political groups. As Wobblies we want to be part of a labour organisation that puts the shits up bosses, not part of a placard bearing pressure group on the fringes of labour (many of us are also involved in political groups, but that's a separate matter.)

The IWW focuses on the workplace because our most common and direct experience of capitalist control is there. We need money. The threat of an absence of money compels many of us to spend our lives working crap jobs. Meanwhile, the rewards that flow to a few from our being ripped off, allows that same select few to buy off the conscience of managers so that they, the managers get on with the job of maximising profit regardless of the consequences to ourselves or the world's ecology. In this way, money talks.

But if money talks, then the hiss of direct action leaves it dumbstruck. As an example, take the farmers who closed down Britain's oil refineries a few months back. They weren't political sophisticates. They were just



IWW IN AOTEAROA

pissed off about petrol taxes and to their own surprise as much as anyone else managed to put a very big spanner in the works of Britain's industrial machine.

That's power. And it doesn't take years of political study to exercise it. The British state agrees. A few months later, the same few farmers had their guns removed from them because they were talking about engaging in direct action again. This time to halt the wholesale slaughter of their livestock during the foot and mouth outbreak.

DIRECT ACTION BY THE WORKERS THEMSELVES

Pissed off workers taking direct action back into the workplace can open up a whole world of fun and possibility for themselves. Consider.

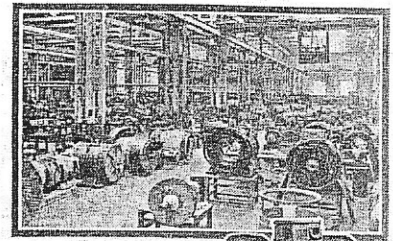
Workers want
a 5%

know it won't be easy. Especially while there are so few of us. But really, what other option do we have? What option do you have? Either we take control of our working life when and where we can or others will continue to control our working life for their own benefit. What you reckon? It's your choice.

We can be contacted by email at iwwgmbdunedin@e3.co.nz or by slow mail through P.O. Box 5407 Dunedin. General information about the IWW is on the web at <http://www.iww.org>. Links from there will take you to the Australian, British and Canadian sites among others.

FIRST STEPS

By May 1 2002 we'd like to see General Membership Branches (GMBs) and Industrial Union.



Squirrel-cage Motor,
Class AG.
Canopy-protected type.

people on the same work site and are connected financially to either a local GMB or IUB.

MEMBERSHIP

The IWW covers all workers including the unemployed, homemakers, students and prisoners, those in the black economy and the self employed. If you do not have the direct power to hire and fire, and agree to abide by the constitution of the IWW and acquaint yourself with its purposes, then you can join for as little as \$6 per month.

Disclaimer and acknowledgment. Thanks to other wobs for their input. The above article is (mostly) a personal viewpoint and should not be seen as representing the views of the IWW as an organisation, nor should it be seen as being representing the viewpoints of other Wobblies (IWW members). Because of space, many important aspects of the IWW have been left out. However, if you have internet access, a wealth of information can be found through the web addresses listed above.

- Wullie

pay increase. They run off to a Trade Union official, who then negotiates with the boss on their behalf. In which case they neither act in union, nor undermine the power of the boss. Sure, they'll have their 5% (assuming the trade union official doesn't sell them short - perish the thought!) But they'll be as powerless and malleable as before. Or they engage in direct economic action which can be as fun and as unpredictable as their imagination will allow. It means they act in union. It means they directly undermine the power of the boss and take a step (albeit a small one) towards Industrial Democracy.

REVOLUTION WITHOUT DELUSION

It's that simple. We are aware that workers might not want to organise themselves and will settle for playing 'follow the leader'. All we can do is introduce them to the ideas of Revolutionary Industrial Unionism and see how it goes. If they pick up on it, then great. If they don't then they don't. Presently we are talking to casuals on the wharves; looking to run "Effective Picketing" workshops for workers and organising in the Hospitality Industry.

We're not deluding ourselves. We

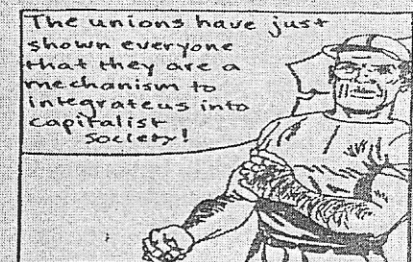
Branches (IUBs) functioning outside of Dunedin and to have a Regional Organising Committee for Aotearoa.

Dunedin is not and cannot be at the centre of any growing IWW presence in Aotearoa. If the IWW takes hold, its taking hold will result from a rhizomic spread, not a centre out spread. If you join the IWW you will not be joining a Dunedin organisation, you will be joining a global union that has no centre as such. By May 2002 the Dunedin GMB should be just another branch in Aotearoa - no different to an IUB in Auckland or a GMB in Christchurch.

The ROC would service the administrative functions of the IWW in Aotearoa and be responsible for the production of necessary union materials. An ROC has no power to tell Branches what to do. Members elected to serve on the ROC do so for a period of one year; are unpaid and are instantly recallable. Branches organise and act autonomously. They also have financial autonomy. There are three types of Branches; an IUB is 10 or more people from the same industry. A GMB is 10 or more people from different industries. It's formed with geographic considerations in mind. Job Branches are 5 or more

libertarian communist talk and discussion

WHAT IS SITUATIONISM?
Talk about influential artistic and revolutionary political group from the 1960s, who had a big influence on the 1968 near revolution in France.



7pm Monday Sept. 10 at the Peace and Environment Centre, Trades Hall, 126 Vivian St., Wellington. All welcome.

libertarian communists, email libcommies@yahoo.co.nz, or c/- PO Box 6387 Te Aro Wellington.

The huge protests against the G8 meeting of the richest eight nations in the world in Genoa, Italy were marked by police violence and repression. One demonstrator, Carlo Giuliani, was murdered by police. And many innocent protesters were arrested, beaten and deported from Italy including Sam Buchanan, who has regularly written for NZ anarchist publications like The State Adversary and Thrall as well as publishing a pamphlet, Anarchy: The Transmogrification of Everyday Life (1999). After Sam was arrested, NZ capitalist media headlines screamed "NZ man faces G8 death charge" (Herald, 25 July). For what actually happened to Sam, read his personal account below. It begins with a short report from an e-mail from Sam before he was arrested, and then his brutal ordeal after a police raid on a school building where he was sleeping with fellow protesters.

E-MAIL REPORT

Genoa is quiet this morning. Yesterday there were battles between protesters and police, banks trashed, supermarkets looted and barricades thrown up. I started the day with a Black Bloc of about a thousand anarchists. We moved into the downtown area and met police outside the 'Red Zone'. The cops quickly pushed us back with teargas and lots of things got broken. We tried to manoeuvre around to the west of the city, but got pretty much nowhere and were distracted by an impromptu picnic outside a looted supermarket...

THE GENOA EXPERIENCE:

PART I: SATURDAY'S DEMO
Saturday was the third day of the anti-G8 demos in Genoa. Reports in the capitalist press claimed up to 200,000 people attended (but we don't trust those lying bastards, do we kids?).

I walked along the main drag, bordering the beach, as the demo came past, it filled a wide dual carriageway, and after about an hour showed no sign of ending. It was a ginourmous demo all right. Me and some Aussies and English joined in and walked up to where the road was blocked by riot cops, vans and armoured cars. Soon teargas canisters were dropping around us, windows started to be smashed, rocks and, I was told, molotov cocktails, began to fly. We dropped back and retreated into town followed by clouds of gas...

PART II: POLICE RAID AND CUSTODY

Five of us were sleeping in a room upstairs in an old school building undergoing refurbishment. The building wasn't a headquarters as some of the press reported, just a place to sleep. There were about a hundred people staying there on Saturday night. Most out-

of-towners were camping at other sites.

A bit after midnight there was three of us in the room, the two Aussies were across the road at the IndyMedia centre. We had just got into our sleeping bags when we heard shouts and running feet outside, looking out we saw about sixty police in riot gear heading for the building gates. By the time we were dressed they had entered the building and shouts, thumps and screaming was echoing up the stairs.

The door to our room had been accidentally locked the previous day, and we couldn't get it open, and so we had to access the room via scaffolding on the front of the building. We hid under a table and waited while thuds and screams continued. This was probably the worst moment in the whole experience. Soon they were banging on the door, and, after a few minutes, broke it open.

Eight or ten cops ran in and began batoning us as we lay on the floor. I tried to protect myself with a chair, but quickly decided I was in for a beating and might as well get it over with. I dropped the chair and curled into a ball with my hands over the back of my neck. I was hit on the arms and legs, and three times on the head, making little fireworks go off in my brain, just like in the comics. They stopped after I

started screaming – half from pain and half as a conscious decision that I should give them some satisfaction.

The beating wasn't as bad as I expected. One of my friends was hit much worse, with a sprained wrist, and bleeding from a head wound. I got off with bruises and a small cut on my head. My left hand and arm was very swollen and isn't quite back to normal after two weeks, but there was no fracture.

We were then frog-marched downstairs into the main room which contained about fifty people, some semi-conscious, many bleeding. We were told to kneel by the wall, later allowed to sit. Beside me was a young Swiss woman who had been batoned in her sleeping bag and was covered in blood and in shock. A Dutch woman on the other side of me had a suspected broken arm. Others were much worse. I tried to keep talking to the Swiss to keep the shock down.

After ten minutes or so ambulance crews arrived and began the triage process. They seemed quite stunned and a bit out of their depth, they had to find old cardboard boxes for splints, and didn't do much for most people other than hand out gauze and antiseptic liquid. After a while things got more organised. About sixty people, including my friends, were taken to hospital. I was

postcard from genoa

a new zealand anarchist experiences state violence up front and personal



A familiar image: Police beat up an anti-capitalist protester in Genoa

wellington G8 solidarity protests

1

On July 21 a wee bit of street theatre was planned to be held in Wellington, in solidarity with the protests against the G8 in Genoa. The football game between the G8 and "People's United" in Cuba Mall was rumoured to be cancelled due to bad weather, but according to a press release the "soccer game...was in fact relocated to a secret underground location to avoid protesters.

Referee Monty Burns said that 'holding the match in secret was

essential to safeguard democracy and the efficient management of a global economy.' Ross Gardiner, left-winger for People's United, replied saying that 'regardless of match fixing we will continue to play as a team against the G8 and other institutions of capitalism.'

People's United responded by giving away free food [courtesy of the Anarchist Teapot] and leaflets in Cuba Mall where they were joined by about 40-50 fans."

.....

2

On July 26, a hastily organised protest was held outside the Italian Embassy in Wellington.

About 70 or 80 people showed up to protest against the excessive use of violence by the Italian capitalist state in Genoa, the murder of Carlo Giuliani, and the beatings and arrest of innocent people staying at a school (including in particular New Zealander Sam Buchanan). The demo tried to deliver a note of protest to the embassy, but the Embassy refused.

hauled off into a police van ringed by lines of cops and driven to the outskirts of Genoa, to a place I later found out was the Bolzaneto Holding Centre.

I was searched, cuffed about the head and punched in the kidneys while being marched through a crowd of cops around the door of the building, then put into a bare concrete cell with about twenty others. We were made to stand against the wall in a spread-eagled position for a couple of hours, which quickly gets very uncomfortable. On the positive side this kept my arm elevated which helped the swelling go down.

We were held at Bolzaneto for about 36 hours. During this time we had little food - water, two biscuits and half a ham sandwich - no blankets and only the clothes we were wearing when the raid started. Anyone wanting to go to the toilet was marched around doubled up with their head forced down by a hand on the back of the neck. There were usually several cops in the cell watching us and sometimes arguing with those who spoke Italian. All requests to phone lawyers or anyone else was denied. We were never told what, if anything, we were charged with, or what would happen to us. The cops didn't seem to know themselves. Lots of rumours went around. We didn't know if anyone outside knew where we were, and later I found that for most of the time we were there, lawyers from the Genoa Social Forum had been looking for us unsuccessfully. Even Genoa's chief judge hadn't been able to find us!

To make things worse, the police changed shifts a couple of times bringing not only different cops, but whole different police forces who had even less idea what was happening. All this was rather intimidating. I kept fairly quiet, figuring there wasn't much to do other than wait things out. The people there included a few Italians, but mostly it was foreigners - Germans, Poles, Spanish, French and others. I was treated as a bit of a novelty as a Kiwi,

which I think gave me an easier ride than some. The Germans seemed to be considered the main troublemakers...

At some time in the early hours of Monday we were divided up again, searched, and had our possessions taken (they'd put them in an envelope and handed them back to us, but this time we didn't get them back, this was the last I saw of my passport, belt and wallet). Then it was back to the spread-eagled-against-the-wall routine for a while, then we were handcuffed in pairs and loaded into a prison bus and driven to Pavia prison.

PART III: PRISON AND DEPORTATION

Arriving at Pavia prison we were handed sheets and plastic plates and shown to our rooms. We each had a room of our own for a couple of days with a view of the soccer field. This was a great improvement over police custody, mattresses, regular meals and a chance to shower. Food was about bad New Zealand student flat standard, but tolerable...

Spent the first day washing the blood out of my clothes and reading a few pages of an old Italian paper I found in the cupboard, made a chess set out of tinfoil and papier mache and played a game against myself. Dozed a lot, watched soccer and tried to think happy thoughts. Every now and then anxiety set in and had to be fought down. Otherwise it was just boring. I quickly lost track of time. On the second day I figured that the cell was about three metres long, so walking up and down 666 times gave me a two kilometre walk.

I was eventually moved to another cell, without the view, and generally of a lower standard, but it contained an Irish guy, arrested in the street for carrying a pocket knife and accused of stabbing a cop. Understandably, he was very anxious. We made another chess set and played lots of games, took turns walking

up and down and chatted about this and that. We had given up asking for phone calls by this time, but in the course of things, one of the staff, who spoke English, came around with forms for alerting our embassies and contacted lawyers for us. He explained that at the end of the five-day period which we could be legally held for questioning, we would be taken in front of a magistrate and possibly released.

Our fifth day in custody dawned and nothing much happened, the helpful guy gave us clean shirts provided by some charity and we waited all day for something to happen. Finally, towards evening I was taken to an office, introduced to a lawyer from the Genoa Social Forum and briefly questioned by the magistrate [Sam was given a paper detailing the charges in Italian, essentially accusing him along with 92 others of being in a building where weapons were stored.] She didn't really dig much, after telling the story of my arrest, she asked me to wait five minutes, then along with a few others, including one of my friends from the room where everything began, and we were all told we were free to go [the charges were dropped].

This turned out to mean we were back in police custody. At this point I found out my wallet and passport had never made it to the prison. We were taken outside, the British Consul chatted to the English, then we were driven to a police station in Pavia. There was a demo outside by supporters, and a bunch of people from the Genoa Social Forum inside who gave us lots of fruit, biscuits and pizza. I phoned my mother and my Irish cellmate's girlfriend, then it was back to hanging around while the lawyers argued about whether we could be deported or not. At least there was company and we caught up with all the people we'd briefly met in custody. Eventually we were given orders banning us from Italy for five years, the Germans were driven to the border and

continued on page 10

east timor

militias, NGOs, activists and anarchists

When the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence in 1999, the reaction of the Indonesian state was both prompt and violent. Newspapers here carried 'Anarchy in East Timor' headlines, but the reality was government-sponsored bloodshed and destruction. The arrival of UN Forces saw a rapid decline in Indonesian militia activity and their eventual withdrawal, but the sad irony is that UN troops came from countries such as Australia and New Zealand, countries that for years had maintained military links with Indonesia, training both Indonesian land forces troops and airforce pilots. Politicians shed crocodile tears for the East Timorese who were slaughtered by the militias, when for years people in Australia and Aotearoa had been protesting against those politicians support for the Suharto dictatorship and its occupation of East Timor.

With the majority of East Timor's infrastructure destroyed as Indonesia pulled out, in stepped financial institutions and various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). No-one can argue that help isn't needed for the East Timorese, but reports have been steadily coming out of the region detailing the incompetence of the bureaucracy of some NGOs, as well as their general alienation from the population. But not all groups who have gone to East Timor have this top-down structure. The close proximity to Australia has meant that a number of Australian activists have gone there to work at a more grass-roots level.



Woman stands in front of the remains of her house after her village has been completely destroyed by militias, East Timor, 1999

Bibi Bulak is one such group. The name means "crazy goat" in Tetum, the lingua franca of East Timor. Many members of the organisation had previously spent the first half travelling northwards through the Australian outback with the Earthdream soundsystem, putting on parties to raise money and awareness for the campaign against uranium mining. Upon reaching Darwin about 15 of them made the 600km flight to Dili (the capital of East Timor). Once there, they busied themselves organising events using their PA gear. Concerts were organised, accommodating up to 10,000 people. Whilst free for locals to attend, members of NGOs, the UN and Peace-Keeping Forces were charged an entry fee with proceeds going to local projects. Members of Bibi Bulak also set to work repairing a building in Dili to become an arts/music centre. The majority of buildings in Dili were destroyed by explosions or fire as the militias pulled out.

What set Bibi Bulak apart from most other groups that have gone into East Timor is that they have based themselves in the local community, learning to speak Tetum, eating and living with local people, whilst most NGOs have kept themselves separate. The majority of Bibi Bulak's work in the first few months was to provide entertainment, doing small and large shows featuring music and performance such as clowning and firedancing. Member Yohan said

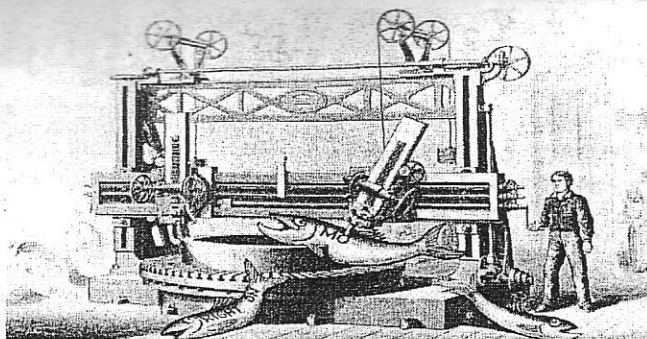
"we are well received. The people are hungry for some fun and music and we'll be mobbed every time we do a show. Even a quick quiet one on the street the other night was a little overwhelming".

Once they had become used to the situation in East Timor, the group began to move around the countryside. First stop was Aileu, a village that was a stronghold of the armed resistance to Indonesian rule, about two hours drive up the mountains from Dili. Another weekend saw an advance group hiking about 15km on abandoned roads to a tiny town called Soibada. Their equipment truck arrived later, surprising everyone else by being able to cross a river and keeping on the rough roads. After a show that night, they moved on to perform another two the following day. Speaking of the performances, Yohan stated "they love it when we make fun of the UN staff, who are so removed from the locals in their air-conditioned SUVs. And we have an axe to grind – they never give us a ride in the backs of their empty utes".

In early September 2000, they travelled to Suai to set up their sound system, the only adequately-sized one available in East Timor, for a service to commemorate the massacre that happened there a year earlier. Events included a mass held by Bishop Belo, some speeches and 10 hours of performances mostly by Timorese groups.

Even some months after the Indonesian withdrawal some elements of the militias were still operating in Dili. A friend of the group was attacked by a group of men as she walked home alone from the beach at 9am on a Sunday morning. She was able to run away and the offenders, known militia members, were apprehended. Yohan commented that many of the militia members in Dili were coerced into joining the militias by the threat of death.

As some activists returned to Australia, others were arriving. The Permaculture Development Institute (PDI) have been helping to establish agriculture using local levels of technology, as food supplies had been severely disrupted. Being able to produce their own food reduces people's reliance on outside institutions such as the International Monetary Fund to help 'resolve' the situation. Bibi Bulak worked with the PDI, utilising the power of performance to address pressing environmental issues such as



SWIFT'S FISH INSCRIBER

deforestation and landslides. This has been very effective as approximately only 30% of the population are literate. The UN and various NGOs have had to acknowledge their work, and have even been obliged to provide some funding or "risk yet another embarrassing example of how the real good grass-roots stuff that happens here is outside of or in spite of the UN policies" (Yohan).

Rowan, a member of the syndicalist workers union Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) arrived at the Bibi Bulak house in Dili in September 2000, laden down with computer gear. He represents an IWW initiative called the East Timor Community Computer Project. The ETCCP has been distributing computers to Timorese NGOs, radical left groups, student groups and schools, among others. But it's not simply a case of dropping off computers. Before they can even train Timorese people in using them, there are huge infrastructural problems to overcome. Rowan stated "the first big problem is the wiring standards which are Indonesian. This means in most cases there is no 'earth' so most computer installations require some rewiring done to the building beforehand. Then there is the condition of the buildings, most do not have doors or windows and are thus prone to damp and dust. This is a problem we find hard to fix as we do not have the materials or the money to be able to refurbish at this stage. A distinct lack of interest by the movers and shakers also doesn't help. UNTAET could not give a shit about the East Timorese as a whole and their bureaucracy is something to be seen – papers everywhere and very little assistance in any areas relating to computers and training".

I asked Rowan how the relationship of grass-roots groups such as ETCCP differed from that of other NGOs. He replied "the larger NGOs such as TimorAid, World Food Program, USAid relate not that much differently than UNTAET staff or Australian contractors.

The staff in most cases stay very separate to the Timorese people. They employ Timorese but do not live amongst them and most staff have no grasp of the language. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule but in most cases people in these NGOs see the East Timorese as 'poor unfortunates' who 'need our help'".

Whilst a typical day for Rowan involves studying Tetum, repairing and/or installing computers and software, he said that being called to eat with locals was an overly regular event. As was the power going off, which meant that he was back to practising Tetum or doing things around the houses such as rewiring or placing river rocks on the dirt to provide a pathway when the wet season turned everything

to mud. Sometimes it's out on the road for a few days into the districts surrounding Dili following up contacts or fixing computers.

Like Bibi Bulak, one of the most practical ways to support the ETCCP is financially. They have organised for containers of computer gear to be sent to East Timor, but say "cash is best. The more dollars we have the more things we can do, unless someone wants to come over and help out. You can live on \$50 Australian a week if you are careful; and the project can get you from Darwin to Dili for free!"

On a somewhat more sombre note Rowan commented that we must "keep the issue of East Timor alive in people's heads. It is far from over and we are now seeing the institution of an economic colony to replace the military one imposed by Indonesia. We are a very small group that have gathered together and we need more people with teaching skills, tech skills and with their heads in the right place and space!"

– Ross

CONTACT AND DONATION DETAILS:

Bibi Bulak Post Restante/ Correios Dili/ East Timor. (Send appropriate materials, including magazines and music).
email: bibibulak@yahoo.com
Electronic transfers can be directed to:
Banco Nacional Ultramarino BNU-Timor
Account: Bibi Bulak
US Funds: 432718-10-001
Australian Funds: 432718-10-002

Bibi Bulak ask that you e-mail them with exact details of any transfers, so they can confirm them. Financial records are available to donors. Donations will supply their centre in Dili with any excess being distributed to similar centres as they travel. Remember that the militias stole or burned nearly everything of value during September 99s reign of terror.

East Timor Community Computer Project
PO Box 756
Brunswick Lower
Melbourne
VIC 3056
Australia
e-mail: etccp@solidarity.infoshop.org.au
account details for donations:
ETCCP General Fund
Commonwealth Bank (Coburg Vic)
Branch Number: 063122
Account Number: 10303491

the freedom shop

Local anarchist bookstore that stocks a wide variety of radical political material.
272 Cuba St, Wellington.

Shop hours: Wed-Fri 12-4pm, Sat 12-3pm.

New booklets available:

<i>Globalisation: Origins – History – Analysis – Resistance</i>	\$2
<i>Genetic Engineering – What it is and How to Stop it</i>	\$1.50
<i>Not for Rent – Conversations with Creative Activists in the UK</i>	\$5
<i>Passionate and Dangerous – Conversations with Anti-Authoritarians and Anarchists in Mid-Western USA</i>	\$4
<i>Anarchists in the Russian Revolution – Two Essays (Makhno and Tsebry)</i>	\$2

Some older booklets:

Sam Buchanan, <i>Anarchy: The Transmogrification of Everyday Life</i>	\$2.50
Tino Rangatiratanga – <i>The Treaty of Waitangi Today</i>	\$2.50

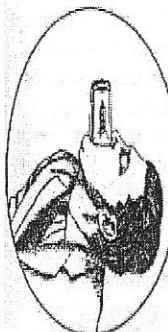
Mailorders: Add \$1 per 5 booklets postage. Send cheques (made out to "The Freedom Shop") or well concealed money to The Freedom Shop, PO Box 9263, Te Aro, Wellington, e-mail fshop@mad.scientist.com

postcard from genoa (continued from page 7)

the rest of us were packed off into a bus and driven to Milan airport. There we were dumped at the door and left. The British consul was there to oil the wheels, and a friend bought me a ticket back to Heathrow. The very helpful consul assured the airline I wouldn't have any trouble getting into the UK, which was a blatant lie, and, after nearly missing the plane while a slow old cop photocopied our documents, we were off...

We were expecting a deluge of journalists on arrival, I spent the flight writing up a statement for the Brits and attempting the in-flight breakfast, which made me nostalgic for the prison food. At Heathrow, I split off from the group and avoided the cohorts of photographers. I got to the immigration desk and announced that I had no passport or ID. By some lucky fluke I was attended by the only helpful immigration official to ever work at

HOW TO PLAY HARMONICA UNDER A GLASS



Use any Harmonica, although a 34-B is best.
Procure an ordinary drinking glass.

Place the harmonica well inside your mouth, your tongue against the lower or bass notes, and allow the upper half of the instrument to protrude from your mouth.

Then take the glass and invert it over the Harmonica, between your nose and chin, balancing it by tilting your head well back.

By moving your tongue up and down over the bass notes, while inhaling and exhaling or blowing and drawing, the desired effect will be produced. Play "Home, Sweet Home" for this trick.

Heathrow. She ran around trying to confirm my visa details and even fetched me a cup of tea when I pretended to be about to have a nervous breakdown. By this time all the stress was catching up with me

and I wasn't having to pretend too hard.

A special branch cop – possibly the smartest police officer I've ever met – questioned me closely about my political involvement and lifestyle. He homed in on all sorts of things I'd rather not have talked about, picking up that I was squatting and so forth. Caught between a rock and a hard place, possible deportation back to Italy in mind, I avoided any bullshit that I could be caught out on and tried to play the happy-go-lucky Kiwi joker. It seemed to work and he ended up shaking my hand and appearing friendly, though you never really know. After a long wait, they couldn't find my visa details on the system, I got them to fax the gardening agency I worked for and get copies of the visa. This worked and they let me in.

– Sam Buchanan (from London)

art report

After more than two years in hibernation, Christchurch's Anarchist Round Table (ART) was formally resuscitated in November last year. ART was originally formed in 1997, but by March 1998 it had ceased to exist as a separate entity as members became collectively involved in various other projects in Christchurch.

However, with the collapse of these other projects, our thoughts once again turned to creating a local anarchist group. Things came to a head during the planning for a protest in solidarity with last year's S11 blockade of the World Economic Forum meeting in Melbourne. The Christchurch protest was organised by a group mainly consisting of anarchists and a handful of SWO members, and many of the anarchists involved thought there was something to be gained by continuing to meet even after S11. Inevitably, this led to suggestions that a more permanent group be established.

There was some resistance from those who had been involved in the original ART and who were weary of repeating the same old cycle of forming an anarchist group only to see it fall apart, whether this be due to lack of enthusiasm, direction or focus. But these fears were more or less allayed when it was agreed that the new group would have a clear set of aims and principles and a sharper focus than the old ART.

The drawing up of these aims and principles was a time consuming and often challenging process. However, it was an extremely valuable experience for all those involved, as it gave members of the group who were newer to anarchism a chance to learn some of the basics while at the same time challenging more experienced members to come to a consensus on fundamental principles.

With regard to the focus of ART, it was agreed that for

the time being the emphasis would be on education. By this we meant both improving our own understanding of anarchist ideas and practices and educating the general public about anarchism. With this in mind, we decided that once our aims and principles were in place we would begin holding regular public meetings.

These meetings began in April with a discussion on the "anti-globalisation" movement, and have continued to attract good attendances of between 10 and 20 people each month. Other topics covered to date include What is Capitalism? and the anti-GE debate. At the same time, we have not forgotten the importance of getting out on the street as a means of both raising our profile and keeping our enthusiasm up. Our May Day event, which revolved around a satirical "Celebrate Capitalism" theme, was successful in both these regards.

Having established itself as a viable ongoing organisation, ART has more recently set its sights on some more challenging goals. The first of these is setting up an activist centre in Christchurch. This has brought with it the added challenge of working fairly closely with other groups and individuals whose aims and methods we might not necessarily agree with. But our efforts look likely to pay off, and ART should soon have its own office as well as a meeting space shared with the Young Greens and Christchurch IndyMedia.

The second of these goals is organising an anarchist conference for Labour Weekend. Here too things have proceeded more or less as planned. For more details see the back page of this issue of *Thrall* and the enclosed flyer. [Note: *Thrall* is not the publication of ART; the two projects are autonomous from each other, and always have been. Just thought I'd clear that up!]

book review: no logo by naomi klein

With all the hype surrounding Naomi Klein, it's difficult to write a review of her book and not her. Partly that's because her book is both a meticulously researched piece of research and also a call to action.

The book is propelled with a logic, passion and drive to explain how the corporate brand has become an irresistible achilles heel for Transnational Corporations. Activists are using this to hold them accountable for human rights abuses, shocking labour standards, environmental degradation and the colonialism being perpetrated this time under the banner of globalisation and trade 'liberalisation'. In the process, the transnationals "have helped us see the whole problem as one system, to connected every issue to every other issue, to not look at one problem in isolation".

Shortly after *No Logo* was published the WTO trade talks in Seattle failed because of both huge protests and the walkout of many 'third world' countries (I'll use the term 'third world' because although it's flawed it's less confusing than the now more widely used phrase 'Global South'). Since then its become clearer that the focus is still shifting and presently its been more on the world bodies that represent capitalism and neo-liberal economics like the World Trade Organisation, World Economic Forum, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, G8 etc. Much of the criticism of this book has been because Klein has seemingly put all of her eggs in one 'anti-corporate' basket.

Walden Bello (from *Focus on the Global South*) has criticised the book for not understanding the importance of the Agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), which is the centrepiece of the WTO, or the relationships between the needs of the megabrands and US govt insistence on TRIPs. He also points out she doesn't deal with capitalism's long time contradiction of overproduction and underconsumption. In other words she is coy about whether she thinks the problem is transnational corporations, capitalism, or the tension between corporations, states and citizens. Whether she avoided tackling capitalism head on because of fear of lost sales, or as a conscious strategy to subvert by the 'softly softly' approach, or simply because of a lack of conclusion is hard to say.

The book traces the brand driven rise of the 'hollow corporation' (brands not products) where the company goes shopping in the sweatshop zones of the third world for their own products. It shows the rise of the logo and the focus on outsourcing the actual manufacturing to sweatshops in the third world. This has seen a loss of full time work and rise of casualisation in the rich countries and is breeding disloyalty.

At the same time that this disloyalty is brewing, Klein

notes that university activists have once again discovered class and the power of the transnational corporations after the post-modern political correctness identity politics of the early to mid nineties.

She then covers the rise of culture jamming, adbusters and Reclaim The Streets. She then mentions a problem in targeting a single corporation. She tells how North Vancouver councillors changed their petrol contract from Shell to Chevron because of human rights abuses in Nigeria, particularly after the killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Within a year Chevron had their own human rights violations (also murder) in Nigeria to defend. "It is sadly ironic that Chevron had undoubtedly benefited from the fact that activists have made a strategic decision to focus their criticism on Shell, rather than on the Nigerian oil industry as a whole". This is true but is the Indonesian oil industry any better? Or the nuclear industry? "It points to one of the significant, at times maddening, limitations of brand-based activism."

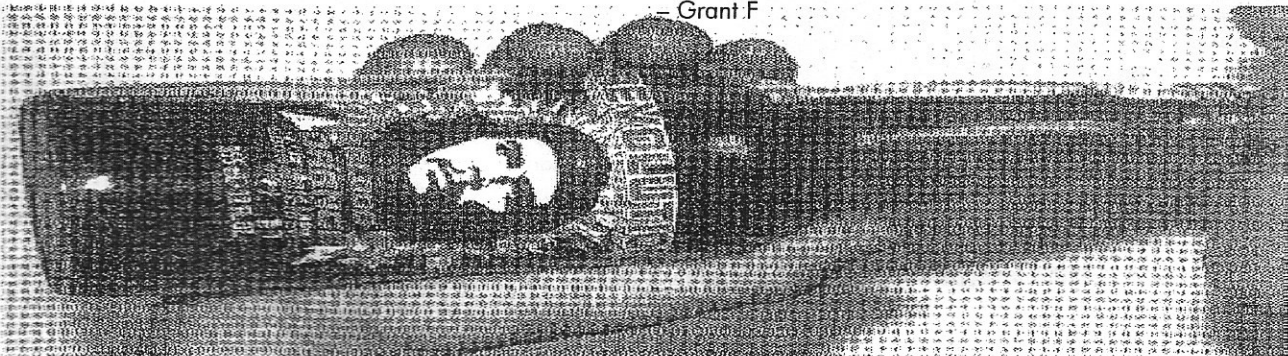
However Klein argues that when the "multinational corporations...the celebrity face of global capitalism...come under close public scrutiny, the entire system is hauled under the microscope as well". Pity then that she does not give more than scant mention of the Zapatistas, People's Global Action (PGA) or the many organisations who are developing critiques of capitalism. Nor does she say much of the socialist traditions, neither the authoritarian or the libertarian strands of socialism (anarchism is a part of the latter). Perhaps most damaging is the lack of debate about the notion that we should 'engage' the local state, or call for the state to 'stand up' to capital. This odd notion, that if only the 'weakened' state was stronger it would be able to resist the powerful corporations, has gained some currency in the more reformist sections of the 'movement'.

Maybe though, it's a bit too mean to say No Logo, No Jobs, No Space, No Conclusion.

After all, although Naomi Klein has been constantly called a leader of this movement, and she does constantly refute this, and so the last lines will be written by all of us. And she does say "this is not a book of predictions, but of first hand observation". Since 1999 capitalism is increasingly in the spotlight and the debates over decentralised global forms of power distribution have increased. The movement has moved on and the repressions are now deadly not just in Bolivia and Papua New Guinea but in the heartland of capitalism.

No Logo is about as good an introduction to both capitalist globalisation and the growing movement against it as you can get in one book. Part two of *No Logo* may not be written by Naomi Klein. It might even be written by you. It will, however, be written.

— Grant F





2001: an anarchist odyssey

of anarchists as promoting nothing but destruction and chaos.

At the same time, however, anarchists themselves could do a better job of promoting anarchism as a viable alternative to capitalist society. By raising the profile of anarchism and giving anarchists (as well as others on the left who are sympathetic to anarchism) the chance to meet and discuss anarchist ideas and practices, anarchist conferences help us carry out this job.

Missed the knowledge wave? Swept away by the capitalist tsunami? Then it's probably time you joined us on a far more satisfying journey: an anarchist odyssey.

BACKGROUND

It's been more than four years since the last national anarchist conference was held in Wellington. Since then we have witnessed the growth of an exciting new global anti-capitalist movement.

This movement has taken many forms, from non-violent direct action to armed struggle, and has extended to every corner of the globe, from Chiapas and Papua New Guinea to the streets of Seattle and Genoa.

However, as anarchists, one of the most exciting things about this new movement is that it is evolving largely along anarchist lines. In other words, it has no widely recognised leaders (much to the dismay of certain sections of the media, not to mention the police and other law enforcement authorities) and is organised essentially in accordance with non-authoritarian and non-hierarchical principles.

This applies both at the local level where demonstrations are often coordinated by a diverse range of quite independent groups, to the international level, where groups affiliated to PGA (People's Global Action), for example, organise and work together in a totally decentralised, non-hierarchical fashion.

But despite this growing popularity of anarchist ways of organising, many activists and most of the general public remain at best sceptical about, and at worst downright hostile towards anarchism and anarchists. One of the reasons for this is of course that the media continue to push the old stereotype

such topics as Direct Action, the role of the media (including Indymedia), the IWW, and Tino Rangatiratanga. Sessions will run from 10am till 6pm on both days, with lunch and dinner provided. There will a chance to meet informally at the end of each day.

COST AND REGISTRATION

The conference will cost \$20 per person for the two days, or \$10 for one day. This includes two meals each day. Accommodation is not included, but the organisers will do their best to make suitable arrangements for people who give them notice in advance of the type of accommodation they need (shared/twin/single room at backpackers/YMCA etc.).

Money should be paid directly

AN ANARCHIST ODYSSEY

2001: An Anarchist Odyssey is being hosted by Christchurch's Anarchist Round Table (ART) and will be held in Christchurch over Labour Weekend (October 20-21).

This national anarchist conference will feature workshops and discussions on a variety of topics loosely based around the theme of local responses to capitalist globalisation and the worldwide "anti-globalisation" movement.

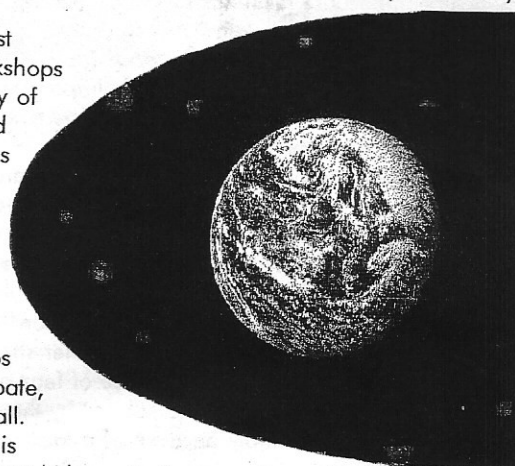
Although the overall emphasis will be on anarchist ideas and practices, members of other left groups have been invited to participate, and attendance is open to all.

The conference venue is Aldersgate, 309 Durham Street Nth, in the centre of Christchurch.

GLOBAL AND LOCAL

The first day of the conference (Saturday 20 October) will focus on the global situation, including discussions/workshops on the role of international organisations such as the WTO and IMF, the worldwide "anti-globalisation" movement, globalisation and anarchism, and globalisation from an anarcho-feminist perspective.

On the second day (Sunday 21 October) we will turn our attention to Aotearoa and look at the various forms the struggles against capitalism have taken here. This will include discussions/workshops on



to the organisers at the start of the conference. However, all those planning to attend are encouraged to register in advance so that we have a clear idea of how many people to expect. A registration form is included in this issue of Thrall. Please contact ART if you need additional forms.

Also, more details about the workshops will be posted to the conference website as they come to hand. The website is at: www24.brinkster.com/aconference

Anarchist Round Table (ART)
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Christchurch
Email: anroundtable@hotmail.com